

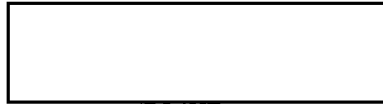
MEMORANDUM FOR: D/DCI/NIO

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George —

The Wilson Committee will be considering these two documents Friday afternoon. The subject matter is of interest to you. Let me know if you have any troubles with these presentations.

Adams Folder



NIO/WE

12 November 75
(DATE)

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DCI/IC-75-3951
11 November 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Members of the Action Plan Task Group

SUBJECT : Response to Part II of No. 13 of "Sensitive
Issues and Allegations"

1. Attached for your review is a "Statement on Samuel A. Adams" and a "Background Statement on Samuel A. Adams," both of which were prepared in the DDI.

2. These documents represent Part II of the response to number 13 in the list of "Sensitive Issues and Allegations." The Part I response to number 13, already approved by the group and submitted to the DCI, is [REDACTED] "'Distortion' of Intelligence for Policy Purposes." The two attached papers will be discussed at a meeting of our group to be held at 1500 hours on Friday, 15 November, in the IC Staff Conference Room.

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[REDACTED]
Chief, Coordination Staff, ICS

Attachments:
as stated

Statement on Samuel A. Adams

In testimony before the House Select Committee and elsewhere, former CIA employee Samuel A. Adams charged that during the Vietnam war the CIA conspired in some unspecified way with the Department of Defense to produce false and misleading, but politically acceptable, estimates of Vietnamese Communist strength. The CIA denies this charge.

By his own recounting, Mr. Adams had unparalleled opportunities to present his views. There is no question that his views were given full consideration by the senior line officers in the Agency responsible for intelligence on the Vietnam war. These opportunities included his participation as a member of the CIA delegation to three conferences on the Vietnamese Communist order of battle. Mr. Adams also had a major role in the drafting of CIA position papers for these conferences and in the drafting during 1967 of a Special National Intelligence Estimate on the military capabilities of the Vietnamese Communists.

During the period in which these conferences were held and the Special National Intelligence Estimate was drafted, Mr. Adams' work and presentations did much to increase the estimates of Communist troop strength and other organized groups in South Vietnam. There was, however, no unanimous agreement within the Central Intelligence Agency or among members of the Intelligence Community on the size of these military forces and organized groups. This reflected fundamental differences of opinion on what should be included in such estimates, on the adequacy of the evidence, and on the reliability of the methods used to derive the estimates.

Although he failed to obtain complete acceptance of all of his judgments, Mr. Adams' work did have a significant impact on the Community's estimates of Communist strength. The record demonstrates clearly that the most senior officials of the U.S. Government were alerted by CIA to the nature of the differences in estimates of Communist manpower. On several occasions the Agency provided to these officials its own independent estimates which were significantly higher than those of the intelligence components of the Department of Defense.

During 1968 CIA conducted two investigations to assess similar charges made by Mr. Adams. These investigations concluded that Mr. Adams had every reasonable opportunity--and more--to present his views and that the CIA officers responsible for assessing the situation in Vietnam carried out their responsibilities for producing unbiased intelligence assessments. Again in December 1972 the CIA Inspector General reviewed a similar complaint made by Mr. Adams and found that his charges could not be substantiated.

Background Statement on Samuel A. Adams

1. As an analyst on Indochina affairs, Mr. Adams undertook in mid-1966 a number of research tasks which were a major factor leading to substantial differences within the Intelligence Community regarding estimates of enemy strength in South Vietnam. These differences became the subject of extended discussion in 1967 during the preparation of a special national intelligence estimate, SNIE 14.3/67, "Capabilities of the Vietnamese Communists for Fighting in South Vietnam."

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His concern about this matter led to his filing of a formal complaint to the Inspector General, questioning the overall conduct of intelligence research on the Vietnam war, and, ultimately, to a charge of deliberate fabrication of intelligence estimates.

3. As a result of research conducted by Mr. Adams in 1966, it became clear to observers in Washington that the official MACV, J-2 order of battle numbers understated by a considerable margin the actual size of the enemy forces in South Vietnam. The fact of this understatement was accepted in the Agency although there were substantial differences of view on the magnitude of the differences and the accuracy and confidence which could be ascribed to either Mr. Adams' estimates or to MACV's numbers.

4. The historical differences between MACV and Washington are usually recounted as a debate about numbers. But there were also significant differences of view as to how the various enemy organizations should be characterized, even if there were agreement on their numerical strength. Many of the difficulties Mr. Adams experienced were due to his inability to obtain agreement among his colleagues on the qualitative clarifications necessary to numerical estimates of the size of enemy forces.

5. Mr. Adams was provided opportunities for his views to be heard, not only by his peers, but by most of the senior line officers in the Agency charged with the production of intelligence on the Vietnam war. He presented his views during a number of major attempts to resolve Community differences on the strength of enemy forces. These included attendance at order of battle conferences in Honolulu in February 1967, Saigon in September 1967, and in Washington in April 1968; and participation in the Community drafting of SNIE 14.3/67 and other papers on enemy order of battle.

6. CIA's official position throughout the 1966-1968 period was that the official MACV order of battle for enemy forces in South Vietnam needed to be revised upward substantially. The extent of this upward revision could not be stated precisely at that time and certainly could not be stated with the confidence and certainty that Mr. Adams asserted. A number of Agency publications nonetheless presented Agency estimates which were significantly higher than those of MACV. The CIA's assessments

of enemy strength in these publications reflected much of Mr. Adams' work. The frequency with which these judgments were presented to the most senior levels of Government (including the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Mr. Walt Rostow, Assistant to the President) demonstrates quite conclusively that the Agency did not suppress intelligence which challenged military estimates as Mr. Adams charges.

7. On 27 May 1968 Mr. Adams filed a formal complaint with the Inspector General in which he questioned the overall conduct of intelligence research on the Vietnam war. His charges received an extremely thorough and extensive investigation on the part of the staff of the Inspector General. Their report did not accept the validity of his charges, but because of the gravity of the charges, and particularly because Mr. Adams' complaint put Mr. Helms' own role in question, Mr. Helms appointed a review board of some of the most senior officials of CIA to look into the charges.

8. The report of the review board reaffirmed the findings of the Inspector General's report and recommended forwarding Mr. Adams' charges and the Inspector General's report to the Chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB). The Deputy Director, CIA, and the Inspector General briefed the members of PFIAB on the case in November 1968. On 3 December 1968 Mr. Adams met with the Executive Secretary of PFIAB.

9. At this point, Agency management regarded hearings and investigation into Mr. Adams' complaints as concluded. Mr. Adams was invited, however, by Mr. Helms to submit recommendations for reform within the Agency to correct the alleged mishandling of the Vietnam account. These recommendations were completed and submitted in January 1969. STAT



10. In February 1969 Mr. Adams was told by his supervisors that the Inspector General's investigations of his charges

had been completed and that he should regard the case as closed. During the next 18 months he continued to promote his argument about the Agency's performance regarding the Vietnam war. In October 1970 he was transferred from the Office of Economic Research to the Special Research Staff.

11. During the next year, Mr. Adams charged that CIA and the Intelligence Community had also grievously underestimated the size of enemy forces in Cambodia. Although this question was not within his assigned responsibilities, he was given several opportunities for his views to be considered by knowledgeable analysts in the Directorate of Intelligence. His views, however, were rejected on the grounds that his research did not fully support his analysis and conclusions and because of reservations about some of the methodologies he used to make his case.



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13. In December 1972, Mr. Adams notified the Office of the Inspector General that he intended to file two new charges involving the alleged fabrication of order of battle statistics by MACV and the alleged fabrication of statistics on enemy logistics and order of battle by the Associate Deputy Director for Intelligence (ADDI), CIA.

14. Mr. Adams' charges against MACV were forwarded to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, US Army, for whatever action he considered appropriate. Mr. Adams was informed in January 1973 by the Department of the Army that it had no authority to conduct investigations of Joint Headquarters such as MACV. He was also informed that the controversy about which he was complaining had been the subject of previous investigations by appropriate authorities.

15. Mr. Adams did not put his charges against the ADDI in writing and submit them. At the time of his oral complaint, the Office of the Inspector General was conducting a routine inspection of the Office of Economic Research, the office with

responsibility for the matters on which statistics allegedly had been fabricated. In the course of that inspection, representatives of the Inspector General interviewed officers working on these matters. The results of these interviews emphasized the complexity of the subject rather than pointing to fabrication of statistics. In the absence of information supporting Mr. Adams' oral statement, and because of his failure to formalize his charges in writing, the Inspector General did not pursue the matter further.

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[REDACTED] In May, Mr. Adams announced his decision to resign from the Agency, effective as of 1 June 1973.